

Fire and Brimstone

Reagan Talk Strong on Morality in Bid To Rekindle Support of Conservatives

By ADAM CLYMER

Talking of morality to a degree that presidents usually avoid, President Reagan yesterday adhered not only to old-fashioned religion but to old-fashioned political values. "Dance with the girl you came in with."

Before he got to the nuclear freeze issue and the opposite poles of a God-fearing America and a Godless Soviet Union, Mr. Reagan's speech to the National Association of Evangelicals meeting in Orlando, Fla., sounded the themes that won him support and votes from the so-called religious right in his 1980 election.

In speaking forcefully against abortion and for prayer in school to identify himself as one of the "many God-fearing, dedicated noble men and women in public life," Mr. Reagan appealed to a constituency that, after his election, to have retired to the political sidelines.

To Paul Weyrich, a conservative who has urged Mr. Reagan to lean to the social issues that drew ordinary nonvoting evangelicals to the polls in 1980, yesterday's speech "might as well have been a declaration of candidacy." That view was backed by a high-ranking Republican strategist who spoke on the condition that his name not be used. He said, "It could fairly be interpreted as another in a series of signals that a candidate is talking."

Mr. Weyrich, who heads the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, said he told Mr. Reagan personally Monday to stress the moral argument against a nuclear freeze. He also said if Ronald Reagan had sounded like that in 1980, the Republicans would not have lost as many seats as they did.

Mr. Reagan's campaigning for Congressional Republicans has been concentrated on a defense of his economic policies and a plea to stay the course he had charted. There was little

evidence of interest in the election, or voting, from the white Protestant evangelicals who appeared to have registered and voted in unusually heavy numbers only two years before.

But yesterday Mr. Reagan sounded like the candidate who in 1980 said in a Dallas speech, "The First Amendment was written not to protect the people and their laws from religious values, but to protect those values from government tyranny."

In Orlando yesterday he said, "Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged. When our Founding Fathers passed the First Amendment, they sought to protect churches from government interference. They never meant to construct a wall of hostility between government and the concept of religious belief itself."

Pledge on School Prayer
That passage introduced a pledge to campaign for a Constitutional amendment to allow organized prayer in public schools. "Let our children pray," Mr. Reagan said.

He also promised to fight in the courts recent judicial decisions that have prevented his administration from informing the parents of young people who go to contraceptives from family planning clinics that receive Federal aid.

Mr. Reagan complained that the critics' voices were "louder than ours" on this issue, but he insisted, "The rights of parents and the rights of family take precedence over those of Washington-based bureaucrats and social engineers."

National polls do not identify clearly the beliefs of the audience to whom his appeal for, and promise of support were directed. But last September a New York Times CBS News Poll found that white Protestants who said they attended church weekly or almost every week and who said they were strong supporters of a nuclear freeze, were also strong supporters of a nuclear freeze.

In a survey of registered voters, 79 percent of the churchgoers asked a school prayer amendment. Only 62 percent of the others surveyed said they would support it. The survey also found that they favored a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion, as against 52 percent of the others in the poll.

But this group, which in the poll included more people than some other surveys might identify as Mr. Reagan's religious conservatives who were part of his 1980 base. The speech had its first and brimstone moments, which the strategist said was important to "reigniting the coalition."

Another conservative, however, indicated the ambivalence with which the political right has viewed the President and the pursuit of a single speech.

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Reagan Denounces Soviet, Cautioning Clerics on Arms

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his national security goals were parallel to the nation's founding spiritual values. He echoed a debating point of the past in praising as a "profound truth," a young father who Mr. Reagan said he once heard discussing Communism with his daughters. The President said the father declared:

"I would rather see my little girls die now, still believing in God, than have them grow up under Communism and one day no longer believing in God."

There was strong applause as the President delivered this line with dramatic emphasis, and an undertone of modesty could be heard in the hall, too.

"Let us pray for the salvation of all those who live in that totalitarian darkness," the President said, adding that Americans also must not forget that Communists "are the focus of evil in the modern world."

He then criticized unidentified people, who, he said, would have the nation accept Communists "at their word and accommodate themselves to their aggressive impulses."

"So I would urge you to speak out against those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority," President Reagan continued.

Church Stands on Freeze
The National Conference of Catholic Bishops is scheduled to vote in May on a final draft of a pastoral letter on the arms race. Earlier drafts have endorsed a two-way nuclear freeze and the final version is expected to include such a statement. Many Protestant denominations have taken similar stands against nuclear arms.

Last month, in another major state, the Synod of the Council of America, representing six leading groups of conservative, Reform and Orthodox organizations, asserted that the United States was "morally bound" to reduce the danger of nuclear war. The statement further urged President Reagan and the Soviet leader, Yuri V. Andropov, to seek a "total cessation of production and deployment of nuclear weapons."

In discussing domestic issues that have been dominant in the Administration's recent budget troubles, the President said that the list of social proposals being pressed in the Congress by conservative legislators and church leaders.

"No one seems to mention morality as playing a part in the subject of sex,"

Mr. Reagan said in complaining that "sexually active" has replaced "promiscuous" as a description for some girls. Mr. Reagan defended the "equal rule," proposed by his Administration and enjoined temporarily by two Federal judges, under which parents must be notified when children receive contraceptive help from Federally aided clinics.

Court Fight Pledged
"Is all of Judeo-Christian tradition wrong?" Mr. Reagan asked, drawing strong applause as he added: "We are going to fight in the courts. The rights of parents and the rights of family take precedence over those of Washington-based bureaucrats and social engineers."

In quick order, with his comments punctuated by the crowd's frequent applause, Mr. Reagan urged these steps: "A renewed fight for a constitutional amendment for public school prayer. "Let our children pray," he said.

"A renewed fight to end 'abortion on demand.' 'You and I must never,' he said, until abortion is outlawed.

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Excerpts From President's Speech to National Association of Evangelicals

ORLANDO, Fla., March 8 (AP)—Following are excerpts from a transcript of President Reagan's speech today to the National Association of Evangelicals:

This Administration is motivated by a political philosophy that sees the greatness of America in you, her people, and in your families, churches, neighborhoods, communities—the institutions that foster and nourish values like concern for others, respect for the rule of law under God.

Now I don't have to tell you that this puts us in opposition to, or at least out of step with, a prevailing attitude among many who have turned to a modern-day secularism, discarding the tried and true values that have made our civilization what it is.

No matter how well-intentioned, their value system is radically different from that of most Americans. And, while they proclaim they are freeing us from superstitions of the past, they have taken upon themselves the job of superintending us by government rule and regulation.

Sometimes their voices are louder than ours, but they are not yet a majority.

An example of that vocal superiority is evident in a controversy now going on in Washington. Since I'm involved, I've been waiting for them to let the parents of young Americans know how far they are willing to go in giving to government their prerogatives as parents.

Let me state the case as briefly and simply as I can. An organization of citizens sincerely motivated and deeply concerned about the increase in illegitimate births and abortions involving girls well below the age of consent established clinics nationwide to offer help to these girls and hopefully alleviate this situation.

Order on Birth Control Clinics
Again let me say, I do not fault their intent. However, in their well-intentioned efforts, these clinics provide advice and birth control drugs and devices to underage girls without the knowledge of their parents.

For some years now, the Federal Government has helped with funds to subsidize these clinics. In providing such help,